
**Health Care & Wellness
Committee**

HB 2805

Brief Description: Regarding the collection of umbilical cord blood.

Sponsors: Representatives Schual-Berke, Cody, Barlow, Hudgins, Hunt, Green, Hasegawa, Pedersen, Loomis, Santos and Kagi.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Department of Health to establish a work group on cord blood collection practices and a pilot project in eastern Washington to expand umbilical cord blood collection.

Hearing Date: 1/28/08

Staff: Chris Cordes (786-7103).

Background:

Cord blood banks, both public and private, store placental and umbilical cord blood that is collected from newborns. Public banks accept cord blood donations, store the cord blood anonymously without charge, and make it available to any patient that needs it. Private banks store the donor's collected cord blood for a fee, and the stored blood is intended for future use by the donor or donor's family.

A 2005 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report on cord blood banking discusses the potential for using stem cells in regenerative medicine. This potential exists because stem cells are unspecialized cells that are capable of dividing and replicating indefinitely and of giving rise to specialized cells, such as heart muscle cells, nerve cells, blood cells, and other cell types.

One type of stem cell, the hematopoietic progenitor cell (HPC), is responsible for the continuous production of several types of normal blood cells. HPCs have been used in transplants to treat leukemia, lymphoma, aplastic anemia, sickle cell anemia, and certain inherited immunity disorders. HPCs are obtained from various sources, including bone marrow and umbilical cord

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blood. They have been used as an alternative to bone marrow for many treatments. According to the IOM report, HPCs obtained from cord blood have a lower risk of a poor immune response to transplantation than HPCs obtained from bone marrow. In addition, the IOM report states that cord blood is readily available, has a low risk for transmitting infectious disease, and involves minimal risk to the mother or the infant at collection.

The 2005 IOM report recommended the creation of a nationwide cord blood stem cell bank program. The U.S. Congress, in late 2005, adopted the C.W. Bill Young Transplantation Program, under which the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regulates cord blood banks, including recognizing entities for the accreditation of cord blood banks, providing standards for the operation of cord blood banks, and establishing a public donor system for cord blood.

Summary of Bill:

Legislative Findings

A statement of legislative findings recognizes that placental and umbilical cord blood is a viable and more accessible alternative to bone marrow in many medical therapies. It cites the estimated need for units of usable placental and umbilical cord blood, the need to increase the ethnic diversity of the supply, and the pioneering work done in Washington on transplantation therapies.

Cord Blood Collection Practices Work Group

The Department of Health (DOH) must identify, support, and provide funding to a work group charged with expanding umbilical cord blood collection practices. The work group must represent:

- a major health research institution engaged in premature birth research;
- a nationally recognized cancer treatment and research institution;
- a nonprofit blood bank engaged in umbilical cord blood collection; and
- an organization representing hospitals.

The work group must develop:

- model educational materials for expectant parents and health care providers regarding donating umbilical cord blood and its uses;
- common protocols for hospitals and blood banks in collecting umbilical cord blood; and
- methods to decrease the cost of umbilical cord blood banking.

Cord Blood Pilot Project

The DOH, in consultation with the work group, must identify a research institution to participate in a pilot project in three hospitals in eastern Washington. The research institution must be actively conducting research in Washington that requires the collection of blood and specimens, including umbilical cord blood, from pregnant women. The pilot project must support, with staff and resources, an expansion of the retrieval and collection of umbilical cord blood beyond the research subjects to the general population. It must use the protocols and methods provided by the work group.

Work Group and Pilot Project Report

By July 1, 2010, the DOH must submit a report to the Legislature and the Governor on the work group's recommendations and the findings of the pilot projects.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 23, 2008.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.